

Beardall Fields Primary School and Nursery

Impact Statement 2023/2024

Chair of Governors: Mr P. Bailey

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Report on the Governance of Beardall Fields Primary School and Nursery

Introduction

The Governing Body of Beardall Fields Primary School and Nursery focuses on four strategic functions of school governance:

1. **Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos, and Strategic Direction**
2. **Holding the Headteacher Accountable** for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
3. **Overseeing the Financial Performance** of the school to ensure its funds are used effectively.
4. **Engaging Stakeholders**, including staff, pupils, and parents.

Governance Arrangements

The Governing Body was reconstituted in May 2020 and comprises:

- **3 Parent Governors**
- **1 Local Authority Governor**
- **4 Co-opted Governors**
- **1 Staff Governor**
- **The Headteacher**
- **1 Associate Governor (Deputy Headteacher)**

Detailed information, including pen portraits of our governing body, link governor information, and minutes of our meetings, is available on our school website.

Meetings and Committees

The full Governing Body meets once each term, chaired by Mr P Bailey. The governing body also has several sub-committees:

- **Strategic Developments:** Chaired by Mr R Bateman, meets three times a year.
- **Finance, Site, and Safety:** Chaired by Mrs G Wilkinson, meets three times a year.
- **Pay Committee:** Chaired by Mr P Bailey, meets once a year.

All members of the governing body serve on these committees, except for the Pay Committee, where governors who are school employees do not participate. These committees address all aspects of school governance in detail, including finance, pupil and strategic matters, policy approval, staffing structures (including recruitment), and reviewing pupil attainment and progress (including pupil premium).

Governor Attendance

The governors at Beardall Fields Primary School and Nursery have shown excellent attendance at meetings, and we have not had to cancel any meetings due to lack of quorum (the minimum number of governors required to make legal decisions). Full attendance records for the 2023/2024 year can be found on our school website as part of the governors' statutory information.

Apologies are usually received in advance of meetings, and agendas/minutes are circulated within the appropriate timeframe. Governors attend meetings well-prepared, with relevant questions related to agenda items and circulated documents. They take responsibility for reading governor service newsletters (now via the Governor Hub), headteacher's reports, policy documents awaiting approval, and other meeting materials.

Governors are a visible part of the school community, regularly participating in monitoring visits and school activities. A governor sign-in book is maintained in the school office to record all these visits, and we also have visit forms for governors to complete.

All governor meetings are conducted in a highly professional manner. There is a constructive level of challenge to the Headteacher and school staff during meetings, and all challenges and responses are meticulously recorded in our minutes. Agendas are structured to enable governors to focus on the strategic development and key priorities of the school.

The chair typically attends on a fortnightly basis (either in person or via MS Teams) to receive updates from the Headteacher, conduct informal walk-arounds, and receive child protection/safeguarding updates.

Key Priorities Addressed by the Governing Body

The Governing Body has been fully engaged in the school's 2023/2024 Improvement Plan, which focused on four key priorities. Each priority was assigned to a specific governor:

1. **Improving Writing Outcomes:** Ensuring the high-quality teaching of writing is consistent across the school so that writing outcomes are improved.
2. **Developing Leadership:** Continuing to develop leadership at all levels through targeted CPD so that outcomes for all pupils will continue to improve in all areas.
3. **Character Education:** Focusing on character education so that our pupils become responsible citizens in all areas of school life and beyond.
4. **Secure Systems:** Ensuring systems and processes are secure in order to ensure that no child is left behind.

As part of the Summer term Strategic Development Committee meeting, a strategic working group collaborated with the headteacher to work on the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and identify improvement priorities for inclusion in the 2023/2024 School Improvement Plan (SIP). This process involved input from staff, parents, and pupil surveys, assessment data, and governor monitoring visits.

This year, we aligned our link governors to monitor the key areas of the SIP and curriculum. This involved governors meeting with relevant staff, questioning, and assessing progress. Feedback was provided to governors during meetings through headteacher reports, senior leader/staff reports, and data, allowing for effective challenge and questioning, as documented in Governing Body meeting minutes.

Governors regularly review all relevant policies to ensure guidance remains current and up-to-date, with particular attention paid to the Department for Education mandatory policy list and local authority recommended policies.

Safeguarding

- All governors' safeguarding checks fully comply with Local Authority (LA) and Government requirements and are recorded in the Single Central Record.

- During the Autumn term, governors discuss the LA Compliance check to ensure all statutory requirements are met.
- Safeguarding is a key component of the Headteacher's termly report to governors.
- The Headteacher meets termly with the Safeguarding Governor as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Programme, with outcomes reported back to the governors.
- All governors have completed safeguarding training and have also undertaken Prevent Training.

Headteacher and Staff Appraisal/Development

Two of our governors are trained to participate in the headteacher's appraisal, which takes place annually at the end of the Autumn term. They evaluate the headteacher's performance against the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers, and set and review individual challenging objectives in relation to the school's performance priorities identified by the Self Evaluation Form (SEF), School Improvement Plan (SIP), and stakeholder engagement.

To ensure the robustness of this process, the school engages the services of a specialist education advisor. Two appraisal governors, along with the headteacher and external advisor, reviewed the 2023/2024 performance and set challenging objectives for the upcoming year.

All other staff appraisals are completed by the end of October, with pay recommendations received and approved by the Governing Body during the November Pay Committee meeting.

Staff Recruitment

- The Headteacher, School Business Manager, and Chair of Governors are trained in "Safer Recruitment."
- Governors are consistently involved in the recruitment processes and have played a crucial role in recruiting various positions throughout the academic year. They actively participate in all stages, including advertisement, shortlisting, interviews, and the final appointment decision.
- The entire appointment process adheres to our agreed recruitment policy.

Training and Development

The Governing Body has appointed a Governor responsible for Governor training (Mrs G Wilkinson). A thorough skills audit takes place annually to pinpoint areas of development, then training is planned to meet these training needs. A copy of the results can be found on our website: <http://www.beardallfields.org.uk/governors>

Governor training is an agenda item for all meetings. A log is kept of all Governor training and this is disseminated to all Governors.

Financial Management

The Governing Body approves the budget each year and is accountable for managing the finances of the school. They scrutinise the budget through the finance committee ensuring the budget is linked to achieve the priorities of the SIP and school vision. This allows Governors to retain oversight of the decision-making process and to ensure the Head Teacher accounts regularly for the school's spending. Governors are confident that the school is securing value for money and acting with financial probity.

- The Governors ensure sound financial management by setting the annual budget, mid-term and year-end reforecasting, termly monitoring of the school budget, completion of CFR

return annually, complying with the LA's audit regime, maintaining a fixed asset register, and agreeing financial limits of delegation.

- Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) - The Governors have formal responsibility for the financial management of the school and understand the importance of effective financial management, ensuring that money is spent wisely and properly, and allows us to optimise our resources to provide high-quality teaching and learning and so raise standards and attainment for all our pupils.
- Recruitment and selection - Governors determine the staff complement and pay policy for the school. They are directly involved in the recruitment and selection process which allows them to identify areas of weakness/need and appoint high-quality staff with high expectations to practice good/outstanding teaching and learning.
- Value for Money - Governors have a strong focus on achieving 'value for money' ensuring that children receive the best education in relation to the budget being spent on the school.
- Benchmarking – Annual benchmarking exercises.
- Monitoring ring-fenced funding including pupil premium, COVID-19 Catch Up Funding and the PE grant to ensure funding is being used to maximise achievement of vulnerable groups to ensure we are "Closing the Gap". By measuring the impact of the use of Pupil Premium directly on those pupils allocated pupil premium.

Stakeholder Engagement

Staff, pupil, and parent surveys are carried out each year, the outcomes of which help to inform our challenge of the head teacher and School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Conclusion

The Governing Body, Head Teacher, and all school staff are continually striving to improve and develop Beardall Fields Primary and Nursery School. As a result, there has been a significant impact on the outcomes for all of our pupils.